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OO RUEHROV  
DE RUEHEG #0003 0021420  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
O 021420Z JAN 09  
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1264  
INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

UNCLAS CAIRO 000003

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

FOR NEA/ELA AND NEA/IPA

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [KPAL](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [EG](#) [IS](#)  
SUBJECT: EGYPT: GAZA ROUND-UP: JANUARY 2

REF: CAIRO 0002

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Rafah Quiet  
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¶1. (SBU) As of 1500 hrs. local on January 2, we have received no reports of demonstrations, attacks, or other problems at the Rafah border crossing into Gaza; however, local USG staff report clashes on January 2 between police and demonstrators in Al-Arish in North Sinai, about 20 miles from the Gaza border, injuring several demonstrators. We continue to monitor this situation closely.

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Demonstrations in Cairo, Delta  
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¶2. (SBU) Local USG staff report that police on January 2 attacked demonstrators outside the Al Gamyra Shariya mosque in downtown Cairo, injuring an Al-Masry Al-Youm reporter who was transferred to a hospital. Local staff also report demonstrations in Ismailia and Suez.

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Israelis Visit Synagogue  
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¶3. (SBU) According to USG staff in Alexandria, about 300 Israelis have visited the Nebi Daniel synagogue there in advance of the upcoming annual celebration at the tomb of Abu Hizara in the Delta. The GoE has been generally supportive of this annual pilgrimage despite Islamist and local opposition.

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Aboul Gheit Blasts Syrians, Israelis, Iranians, and Hamas  
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¶4. (SBU) Local press reports that Foreign Minister Aboul Gheit told local editors on January 1 that Syria had refused an Egyptian request that Hamas allow the return of the Palestinian Authority to oversee the re-opening of the Rafah border crossing. Aboul Gheit said that Israel has attempted since 1981 to separate Gaza from the West Bank. He said the current Israeli attack on Gaza is the third of its kind, and Egypt will not allow such attacks to continue. He added that Hamas tried to obtain Egyptian recognition because it knows that Egyptian recognition will lead to international recognition, which in the end only serves Israeli interests. Aboul Gheit said that Egypt has the ability and power to work alone, even if it has to face both the Israeli and Iranian "projects" in the Middle East. He said that Israel has "offered" Gaza to Egypt, while Jordan "takes" the West Bank, but Egypt refuses such talk. He added that Hamas' strategy was to force Egypt to recognize Hamas by permanently opening the Rafah crossing, but this is something that Egypt cannot do, since doing so would effectively end the Palestinian

Authority in the West Bank, and also achieve the Israeli goal  
of separating Gaza from the West Bank.  
SCOBET